



July 22, 2016

Interested Parties:

You are invited to provide input at a public open house meeting on the proposed rehabilitation of Clear Branch Dam (Laurance Lake). Representatives from USDA and other partnering agencies/groups will discuss and present the natural resource issues and conceptual alternatives of the dam rehabilitation.

The USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), in cooperation with the United States Forest Service - Mount Hood National Forest (cooperating agency) and the Middle Fork Irrigation District as the project sponsor, is proposing to partially fund rehabilitation through the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act of 1954 (PL83-566) and the Agricultural Act of 2014 (PL113-79). The dam is located approximately five miles southwest of Parkdale, Hood River County, Oregon.

Public Scoping Comment Period

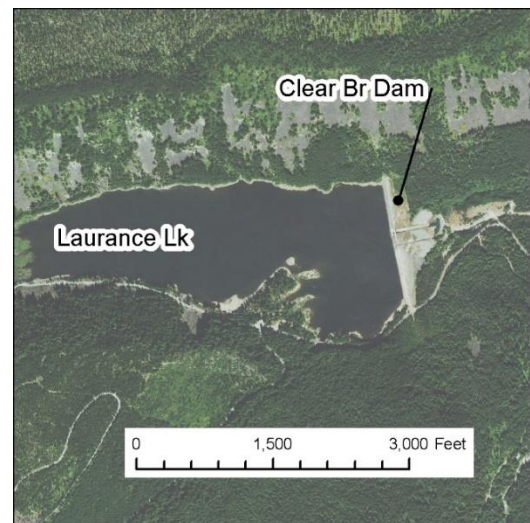
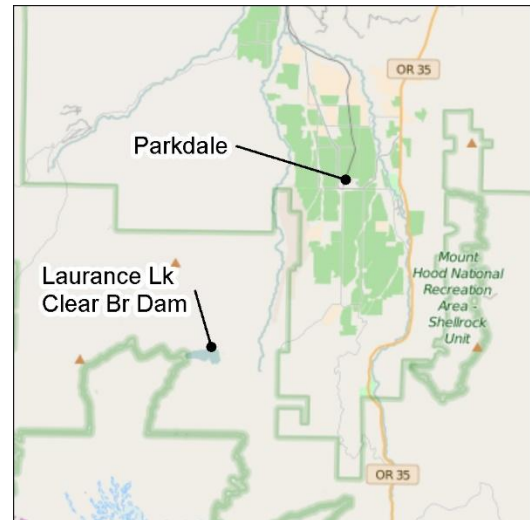
Open: July 27, 2016 - Wednesday

Close: August 26, 2016 - Friday (close-of-business)

Public Scoping Open House

Date: August 15, 2016 – Monday 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM

Place: Parkdale Fire Station, 4895 Baseline Dr.
Mt Hood – Parkdale, OR 97041



The meeting location is accessible to persons with disabilities. A request for an interpreter for the hearing impaired or for other accommodations for persons with disabilities should be made at least 48 hours before the meeting. More project-specific information is available by contacting **Ron Smith (NRCS) at 503-414-3252 or email at ron.smith@or.usda.gov.**

Project Introduction

This project is being partially funded by the Agricultural Act of 2014 (PL113-79), which authorizes funding and technical assistance to rehabilitate aging dams built under the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act of 1954 (PL83-566). NRCS, as the lead federal agency, is initiating a Supplemental Watershed Plan and Environmental Assessment (Plan-EA) to analyze impacts to the natural and human environment. The Plan-EA will comply with the Council on Environmental Quality's regulations at 40 CFR Parts 1500-1508, which require an evaluation of potential environmental impacts associated with federal projects and actions.



USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service-Oregon
1201 NE Lloyd Blvd - Suite 900
Portland, OR 97232

Project Purpose and Need

In accordance with the rehabilitation provisions of the NRCS's Small Watershed Program, the area is eligible for rehabilitation funding due to the need to ensure public safety downstream from the dam. The purpose of the project is to rehabilitate the dam to meet current NRCS and Oregon State Dam Safety regulations and current engineering standards. The project is necessary in order to extend the life of the dam to continue to provide the authorized purposes of providing a clean, dependable water supply and distribution system for up to 8,000 acres of irrigated cropland, and to assist in improved management of the fishery for anadromous and resident fish.

Public Participation

Public participation is vital to provide those interested in or potentially affected by the proposed project an opportunity to share their comments, ideas, and concerns during the initial scoping period of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process.

You are encouraged to attend the public open house and express your comments, ideas, and concerns. Comments may also be submitted via letter or email anytime during the public scoping comment period.

Comments must be received by close-of-business on August 26, 2016.

Please mail written comments to: Ronald W. Smith 1201 NE Lloyd Blvd. Ste. 900, Portland, OR 97232.

Submit comments by email or fax to: Clear Branch Dam Rehabilitation Project Email:

ron.smith@or.usda.gov FAX: (855) 651-9082

NRCS will review the comments and develop conceptual alternatives for analysis in the Draft Plan-EA. Preliminary resource concerns identified during this initial scoping period will also be addressed in the Draft Plan-EA.

Your feedback is valuable to us; we encourage you to attend the public open house on Aug. 15 or submit comments to us by Aug. 26.

Sincerely,

Ronald W. Smith, P.E.

USDA-NRCS Oregon State Conservation Engineer

Non- Discrimination Statement

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